

PRINCIPALS' ADVISORY COUNCIL (PrAC) MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 9, 2004
9:00 A.M. – 2 P.M.
STATE BOARD ROOM

ATTENDING

Phillip Barker, J. Leon Davidson, Linda France, Susan French, Jennifer Hobbs, Beth Johnson, Mike McKenzie, Phyllis O'Neal, Mark Raleigh, Steve Schenck, Mark Sellers, Rose Skepple, Jon Stratton, William Whitaker, Commissioner Gene Wilhoit, and Deneen Zimmerman

WELCOME AND SHARING LOCAL ACTIVITIES

- The 1% increase for title programs and other federal programs is huge to districts.
- Teachers feel betrayed with the proposed health insurance options and no pay raises. Teachers are talking strike.
- Equity is needed across the state in salaries and benefits for university, county, city and state employees. Some Kentucky educators are seeking employment in other states with better benefits. Educators are likely not to encourage others into the education profession.
- STI continues to be a problem. **Commissioner Wilhoit and other Department staff are meeting with the STI people next week, and he will provide principals with the outcomes of the meeting.**
- The Department's support of the Collaborative's Middle School Demonstration Project was commended.
- The new preschool certification, the IECE, is too complicated and causing problems for schools. **Commissioner Wilhoit indicated that the Department would look at this issue.**
- The new senate bill for attendance is causing problems with STI. Also, students being excused from school for educational trips is a problem. Northern Kentucky superintendents put together criteria for these students to meet, and Beth Johnson will send this information out to the PrAC members.

Seven Steps Forward in Assessment (Commissioner Wilhoit)

- Commissioner Wilhoit shared *The Seven Steps Forward in Assessment* as the Department's response to earlier conversations he had with the advisory groups around assessment and accountability in which concerns emerged around the writing portfolio, the arts/practical living and vocational studies, student accountability, the measurement of the progress of individual students or groups of students through the school education experience, turnaround time in terms of results, and the lack of trust with the scoring process. The *Seven Steps Forward in Assessment* will address:
 - ✓ *updating the content standards to provide more specificity to teachers and to align with national expectations;*
 - ✓ *improving writing component of assessment by identifying a writing task force to come up with suggestions that the Kentucky Board of Education will consider in December;*
 - ✓ *finding a better way to expose students to authentic art forms, how do you keep arts as an important part of the curriculum, and how can the arts be assessed differently;*
 - ✓ *folding a longitudinal component into accountability in the future;*
 - ✓ *using online assessments combined with in-state scoring by Kentucky teachers to produce immediate feedback; and*

- ✓ *end-of-course assessments/snapshot assessments that would be used to help measure a student's success in mastering the curriculum and allow a student to be credited for mastering the curriculum.*
- **Input from the advisory council members:**
 - ✓ *Districts need to be notified as soon as possible about the Department's plans to combine the Core Content, Program of Studies, and the Academic Expectations into one on-line document. **Commissioner Wilhoit will send teachers, principals, and superintendents a letter alerting them of the development of this on-line document and soliciting their help with thinking through these documents.***
 - ✓ *Publish the names and contact information of the members of the writing task force. Consistent implementation of the writing process is needed across the state. Make the writing process more meaningful and less time-consuming. Teachers feel they have control over the writing process and this needs to change.*
 - ✓ *With regard to the arts assessment, determine what content is important at each level for all students to possess a general knowledge of the arts, and then provide adequate staffing to support this. Should students be required to have two electives in the creative arts for graduation? What about a letter to the reviewer talking about their experience in the arts? Have a scoring guide with an open response question. **Commissioner Wilhoit indicated that there are two groups (one group will be working with career and technical education staff and one in the arts) looking at the issues and will provide the PrAC with their findings.***
 - ✓ *Commissioner Wilhoit indicated that career and technical education needs to be merged with academics. The Department has been working with higher education to align postsecondary curriculum with the high school curriculum. The career and technical people are asking the Department to work with them, so students will be prepared if they choose to go into the technical school or college system. They are not convinced our measuring is giving an accurate picture of those skills. Design the Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) to be more reflective of what they want to do with career planning.*
 - ✓ *Commissioner Wilhoit is looking for pilot schools for the on-line testing for this spring. The Department will be able to gain enough information from these pilot sites to determine what affects students' scores. The advisory council members expressed concern with the lack of equipment, staff training, and scheduling. The whole system needs to be more flexible.*

Follow-Up on the Gates Grant (Steve Schenck, Associate Commissioner for Office of Leadership and School Improvement (OLSI), and John Fields, Branch Manager for OLSI)

- John Fields, Branch Manager for the Office of Leadership and School Improvement, shared that Phase II of the Gates Grant had a goal of registering 700 participants and as of September 9, 2004, the goal was met. There are eighty-eight districts and KSB and KSD participating. Also, to date, approximately 150 people have received the training. Fifty of those are other leaders such as instructional supervisors and assistant principals. We hope to complete the training by December 31, 2004. Follow-up training and support will continue until June 30, 2005.
- Non A-1 schools can purchase their own pocket pc ranging from \$250-\$400, and the Department will provide free training and support (local trainers, KDE, and Help Desk via KVHS) throughout the year.

Instructional Support Network (ISN) (Steve Schenck & David Cook, Principal for OLSI)

- Steve Schenck and David Cook shared that the Instructional Support Network (ISN) builds the capacity of district administrators to provide leadership to their schools in making connections

between planning for instruction and planning for professional development. These connections provide the foundation for continuous school improvement. Recently, the Department surveyed every district through the high quality professional survey, and the responses indicated that there are a lot of districts and schools that have no idea how to connect professional development planning to improvement planning. The Department will begin weekly e-mails to the network to provide information, resources, links, etc., and the Department is planning a ½ day meeting in October. Schools need to be living their CSIP's – they should constantly be looking at their plans, monitoring their plans, and evaluating the effectiveness of their plans and changing the plans if they are not effective. Districts need to support this process.

Input from the advisory council members:

- District staff need resources to help schools focus on the priority goal, and districts need to provide schools with supports to make planning more meaningful. Too many schools have too many goals they are focusing on. Schools need to create flexible plans that allow individual teams, individual content area teams, or grade levels the ability to focus on individual goals while keeping their priority goal as the main focus. Teams should be organized around key issues that need to be addressed and ensure that the resources are there for teachers to work together over time. Continuity is needed between district and school plans. Districts and schools need to realize they may not all be on the same page, but that they all the same priority goal and discuss what can be done together and what can't.
- A good principal is a MUST for this planning and implementation to be successful.
- Central office staff need to think of their jobs as being about instructional support too and working together with school staff toward the overall plan.
- There are three parts to a good teacher – they have to know the curriculum, they have to know instructional strategies, and they must have a compelling nature.

Refocusing Secondary Education (Commissioner Wilhoit and Linda France, Deputy Commissioner for Learning and Results Services)

- Kentucky is rethinking what can be done to establish a structure more supportive to high school students. Statistics show that out of 100 students that enter high school, only 65 graduate from high school in four years; only 39 of those 65 students will enter college; only 26 out of the 39 are still in college their sophomore year; and only 15 out of the 26 will graduate from college. To address this issue, the Department will be discussing end-of-course assessments and performance assessments. Every high school student (starts in middle school) will have an Individual Learning Plan to address their individual learning needs. Discussions will take place on how to build a culture at the high school level that supports individual learning opportunities, high expectations, and continuous improvement. **North Oldham High School has a unique model in place, and the Department will share the results of this model with the PrAC when the information becomes available.** Discussions are being built around the framework of how to offer rigor to students, how to make learning relevant to students, and how to build lasting relationships for students. The Department will continue to talk with superintendents and focus groups. High school schedules need to serve the individual learning needs of students. **This will be put on the December agenda.**

Input from the advisory council members:

- Teachers need to be trained to rethink about what high schools will look like, what they will get out of it, what it means, and what they are suppose to do. A lot of teachers at the high school level teach content and not students.

- STI does not support flexibility with scheduling and grading students at the high school level. A performance-based grading system is needed to move toward performance-based credit.
- The focus needs to be more on the percentage of students that do not graduate from high school or who graduate from high school but choose not to go to college.

NEXT MEETING: DECEMBER 2, 2004